GIG CYMRU NHS WALES | Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru Public Health Wales	**Name of Meeting** People and Organisational Development Committee **Date of Meeting** 15 October 2026 **Agenda item:** 4

Partnership Working Report – 1 April 2026 to 30 September 2026	
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Approval/Scrutiny route:	People and Organisational Development Committee

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide an update to the People and Organisational Development Committee on the work of the Joint Medical and Dental Negotiating Committee and the Local Partnership Forum for assurance.

The Committee is also asked to receive the Trade Union Recognition and Facilities Time Agreement, developed in partnership and agreed through the Local Partnership Forum during the reporting period.

The paper covers the period 1 April 2026 to 30 September 2026.

Recommendation:

APPROVE	CONSIDER	RECOMMEND	ADOPT	ASSURANCE
☐	☒	☐	☐	☐

The People and Organisational Development Committee is asked to:

- receive the report for information and to **approve** the attached Facilities Time Agreement.

Link to Public Health Wales Strategic Plan Public Health Wales has an agreed strategic plan, which has identified seven strategic priorities and well-being objectives. This report contributes to the following:	
Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	All Strategic Priorities/Well-being Objectives
Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	Choose an item.
Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	Choose an item.

Summary impact analysis	
Equality and Health Impact Assessment	An EQHIA is not required for this paper.
Risk and Assurance	Continued partnership working with Trades Unions and management remains a vital component in addressing people related matters within the organisation.
Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act	This report supports and/or considers the Health and Care Standards for NHS Wales Quality Themes Governance, Leadership and Accountability.
Financial implications	There are no financial implications arising from the update provided by the paper.
People implications	Effective partnership working with Trade Union colleagues is a key element of effective governance and support to our staff. Continued partnership working is a vital component in addressing people related matters within the organisation.

1. Purpose/Situation

The purpose of this paper is to provide an update to the People and Organisational Development Committee on the work of the Joint Medical and Dental Negotiating Committee and the Local Partnership Forum for assurance.

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The paper covers the period 1 April 2026 to 30 September 2026.

The People and Organisational Development Committee is asked to receive the report for information.

2. Background

A core part of our governance structure, and as identified within our Standing Orders, is the Local Partnership Forum (LPF); this forum provides the formal mechanism where the organisation and recognised Trade Unions work together. Members of the LPF engage with each other to inform, debate and agree local priorities on workforce-related issues facing the organisation. Discussions focus on strategic, high-level organisational plans and priorities, enabling the LPF to be the formal mechanism for consultation, negotiation and communication between the recognised trade unions and management on specific workforce related matters that arise from the organisation's strategic priorities and plans.

Public Health Wales recognises the following Trade Unions for the representation of members employed by the organisation: GMB, MiP, Royal College of Nursing, Society of Radiographers, UNISON, and Unite.

In addition to the Local Partnership Forum (LPF), we have a Joint Medical and Dental Negotiating Committee (JMDNC) where the organisation works in partnership with our Medical and Dental Colleagues and their recognised Trade Union, the British Medical Association (BMA).

Members of both fora engage in partnership working to inform, debate and agree local priorities on workforce-related issues facing the organisation. Discussions focus on strategic, high-level organisational plans and priorities, and more informal or operational matters are addressed through regular informal meetings.

3. Description/Assessment

The LPF meets approximately every other month. During the period 1 April 2026 to 30 September 2026, the LPF met twice, on the 21 April and the 16 June.

The JMDNC meets approximately every 2-3 months. During the period 1 April 2026 to 30 September 2026, the JMDNC met on the 18 June and is scheduled to meet again on the 23 September.

Informal meetings to support partnership working also take place every other month, with the aim of resolving operational issues in an appropriate and timely manner.

3.1 Key topics of discussion

During the period of this report, the organisation and its Trade Union partners have worked on several workforce-related issues in partnership, alongside updates and discussions on wider organisational changes. These are outlined below:

Organisational Change and Staff-Side Engagement
A significant focus of the LPF was oversight of organisational change activity across Public Health Wales. LPF members discussed the principle of partnership working during change and emphasised the importance of early staff-side involvement in service reviews and working groups. There is currently considerable change work underway, particularly within NHS Wales Performance & Improvement. Concerns were raised about the capacity of Staff-Side Committee (SSC) to provide support to the large number of change programmes.

Workforce Policies and All-Wales Policy Implementation
The LPF spent considerable time reviewing and endorsing workforce policies, reflecting the significant national policy agenda across NHS Wales. Policy discussions included Family Leave, Personal Relationships at Work, Mental Wellbeing, Fixed Term Contract management, Neonatal Leave provisions, and implementation of the new All-Wales Disciplinary and Improving Performance at Work policies.

LPF Terms of Reference
Discussions took place around reviewing the LPF Terms of Reference, particularly to align with Welsh Partnership Forum guidance, considering opportunities to strengthen links between local and national partnership working arrangements and developing a refreshed workplan. The review of the Terms of Reference will be concluded by 30 September 2026.

Workforce Sustainability, Workforce Planning and Job Evaluation
The LPF discussed workforce sustainability challenges facing the organisation., this included future workforce requirements, succession planning, digital capability, workforce supply issues and long-term workforce planning arrangements.

Staff-side colleagues raised concerns regarding job evaluation activity including consistency of outcomes and partnership support required for job evaluation panels. The vacancy for the Staff Side Job Evaluation Lead was also discussed and options remain under consideration to enable fulfilment of this important role.

Employee Relations Learning and Organisational Culture
The LPF considered how organisational learning is captured and acted upon following formal employee relations processes. Members discussed how recommendations arising from these cases are implemented, monitored and shared across the organisation to prevent recurrence of issues.

Alongside this, members considered staff-side capacity challenges, Facilities Time arrangements and the ability of trade union representatives to engage effectively in partnership activities. Discussion reflected a shared desire to strengthen trust, learning and constructive partnership working.

Facilities Time Agreement
During the reporting period, the LPF discussed the Trade Union Recognition and Facilities Time Agreement as part of wider discussions on staff-side capacity, effective partnership working and the need for clear, sustainable arrangements to support Trade Union representatives in carrying out their recognised duties.

Please see Appendix 1 for the updated Trade Union Recognition and Facilities Time Agreement. The updated agreement was co-developed by management and staff-side colleagues, with feedback incorporated through the LPF. This provides a clearer framework for Facilities Time, strengthens shared expectations between the organisation and recognised Trade Unions, and supports constructive engagement on workforce matters in line with Public Health Wales' partnership working arrangements.

Workforce Sustainability and Health Protection Service Resilience
JMDNC members discussed concerns regarding the resilience of the Health Protection service. A prioritisation framework has been implemented to maintain critical services, with recruitment arrangements progressing to improve capacity.

Resident Doctor Contract Implementation
During the period of the report, work has been ongoing to ensure compliance with the new Resident Doctor contractual arrangements effective from 1 August 2026. A local implementation group continues to meet to embed this change.

SAS and Fatigue and Facilities Charter Progress
Work continues to address compliance with the SAS Charter, including around patient activity recording. Progress continues on implementation of the Fatigue and Facilities Charter, compensatory rest arrangements are subject to ongoing discussions with colleagues and BMA representatives.

Consultant Job Planning

Consultant job planning compliance remains below the Welsh Government target. Further work is underway to improve compliance, identify barriers and support uptake of the electronic e-job planning system.

Recognition Agreement
The JMDNC considered the NHS Wales model recognition agreement during the reporting period. The agreement was signed off through JMDNC, confirming the local arrangements for recognition and engagement with Medical and Dental colleagues and their recognised Trade Union, the BMA. This provides a clear framework for partnership working, consultation and negotiation on matters affecting medical and dental staff, and supports consistent alignment with the wider NHS Wales approach to employee relations and staff-side engagement. Please see Appendix 2 for information.

4. Recommendation

The People and Organisational Development Committee is asked to:

- receive the report for information and to **approve** the attached Facilities Time Agreement.

Appendix 1 – Trade Union Recognition and Facilities Time Agreement (LPF)

Appendix 2 – Recognition Agreement between Public Health Wales and its Local Negotiating Committee (JMDNC)